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EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE PHILADELPHIA MEETINGS

The twentieth annual convention of the American Nurses' Association, held in Philadelphia for a week covering the last days of April and the first two of May, was an unusually serious one, as such a gathering must be when the country is at war. It seems fitting that this convention should have been held in a city of such historic associations and of such present-day patriotism as Philadelphia. The hospitality of the nurses of the city, heartfelt and gracious, upheld the traditions established by an earlier group when the Association met there in 1904. Not only the nurses of the city but many of the women's clubs were hostesses, as the pleasant afternoon teas were served by a different group of the latter women each day.

The attendance was very large, more than 1200 being registered, while, as is always the case, and in spite of the most assiduous efforts on the part of those in charge of the registration, hundreds came and went who did not register. Probably the attendance, all told, was between 1800 and 2000.

On the evening devoted to the Red Cross, the Academy of Music which holds 3000, was packed, the floor and three galleries being filled. When the great audience rose to sing the Star Spangled Banner and when it listened to the stirring addresses given by Miss Delano, Miss Noyes, Mr. Wadsworth and Mr. Wilson all hearts were filled with a desire to serve in this national crisis. This desire was put into words on the closing day of the convention, when Miss Riddle, as chairman of a committee appointed for that purpose, read resolutions addressed to the President, offering the services of the members in any way they are most needed. As many requests for copies of these resolutions have already been received, we reproduce them here.

WHEREAS, the lives of American citizens were jeopardized upon the high seas and even threatened in our beloved land, and

WHEREAS, the free public institutions with the blessings of liberty they secure to us and our posterity were endangered, and

WHEREAS, after the exercise of profound and long-suffering patience under duress, the President of these United States of America reluctantly admitted the existence of a state of war between our country and a foreign power, therefore be it

Resolved that this great body known as the American Nurses' Association, numbering forty thousand women, does hereby extend to the President of the United States its sympathy in his hour of trial and its confidence in his ability to guide us safely through this crisis, and be it further

Resolved that we pledge our best service to the nation wherever called upon to render it, either in home or foreign field, in the daily routine of civil or military hospital, or in the equally great effort to conserve, protect and strengthen the health and endurance of the citizen population, the men, women and children at home in our land.

Another resolution, offered on the first day by Miss Davis and also sent to the President, endorsed the principle of War Prohibition. The President has acknowledged these resolutions with an expression of appreciation to the senders.

The programme was full of interest, the sessions were well attended, and the round tables which were, as usual, in great demand, gave the needed opportunity for practical discussion of the subjects presented.

Mrs. Fox, the Association's parliamentarian, who was present, said on the last day that she had attended many conventions but never one where the delegates took their duties so seriously or where they worked so hard. The round tables on Parliamentary Law, voluntarily offered by Mrs. Fox, were much appreciated, while those bearing on Red Cross subjects and those on Reorganization, conducted by Miss Sly and Miss Deans were in such constant demand that the leaders had a hard-working convention. They were satisfactory, however, for those who came perplexed went away with a clear idea of what is to be done to bring all into a simpler organization.

Saturday afternoon brought the one relaxation of the week in the delightful trip to Valley Forge provided by the W. B. Saunders Publishing Company. The ride through the country in its garb of spring, the interest and beauty of the place itself, with its memories of courage and heroism, the historic relics, the patriotic addresses in the memorial chapel and finally the much appreciated luncheon provided by the Maryland State Association as its contribution to the entertainment of the nurses, made the occasion one to be long remembered.

The rest afforded by Sunday was also a grateful break in a busy week. Little groups of delegates were conducted to the churches of

their choice by some Philadelphia hostess in the morning, while in the afternoon there was opportunity to walk or ride about the city. Some even went off to Atlantic City for the day to rest beside the ocean.

The business sessions occupied but a small portion of the time of the delegates, as the most important questions had been decided last year and were now acted upon again in their final form as by-laws. The first new business of importance was the decision to incorporate under the laws of the District of Columbia, as it is impossible to secure a national charter while Congress is so occupied with war. The District laws had been found to give the needed latitude, the process of incorporation was a simple one and between the vote of the delegates and the close of the convention the deed was done. An unexpected change in the new membership clause was made necessary by applications for membership by nurses in Alaska and the Philippines. The words "members of state associations" are expanded to include not only state associations but associations in our territories, possessions or dependencies. Lastly, the greatly-desired interstate secretary has been secured for the period of one year, the greater part of her salary to be paid from the earnings of the JOURNAL, with a smaller contribution from the League.

When the subject of the Relief Fund was brought up, it was unanimously decided to retain the old name, leaving the McIsaac Fund as a separate one to be used as a loan fund in connection with the scholarships offered by the Robb Memorial Fund Committee and to be administered by that committee. Nurses who have been long interested in the Relief Fund will be sorry to hear of the resignation of its chairman, Mrs. Crass, who has held that position from the time the committee was formed and to whom much of the success of the Fund is due. Her residence in the state of Washington made her feel that it was wiser not to try to continue in office. Her successor is Miss Golding of New York, also an original member of the committee who is thoroughly familiar with the details of the work and who, like Mrs. Crass, has its interest at heart. It is always refreshing to witness the enthusiasm with which pledges to this Fund are made. During the two short periods of receiving pledges over \$1200 were promised, which means that more can be done during the coming year to help nurses who need a lift over a difficult place.

A new feature was introduced into the pledging by Mrs. Warmuth of Philadelphia who resigned as a permanent member of the Association and pledged the amount of her dues, \$2 a year, to the Relief Fund. The idea proved a popular one, for many followed her example until twenty-five had so resigned and so pledged.

One pleasant feature of the convention was the presence of four charter members, Misses Davis, Lucy Walker Donnell, Nutting and Maxwell. Indeed Miss Davis was present in the triple role of charter member, honorary member and delegate from the Massachusetts State Association. No one of the younger women was more alert, more helpful in her suggestions; no one of the older women was more honored. The editor-in-chief of the JOURNAL was not present, but was made an honorary member.

Cleveland was chosen as the meeting place for next year, although urgent invitations were received from Rhode Island, Georgia and Wisconsin.

During the convention three head nurses of base hospitals were called away, with their assistants, to mobilize their forces and proceed to their posts of duty.

At the Directors' meeting following the convention a new section was created on Legislation with Anna C. Jammé as chairman. The choice of an interstate secretary was put in the hands of a committee whose decision will be referred to by the directors at their fall meeting.

CONVENTION REPORTS AND PAPERS

Although the convention just closed was the twentieth annual one, it was the first real meeting of the American Nurses' Association as a whole since its affiliation with the League and the Public Health organization. The programme was presented in such a way that all sessions were joint sessions except those devoted to business, which were held separately. So far as was possible, each subject on the programme was presented in three aspects, a general one, a teaching one, and a public health one. In the past, the League has published its papers in its annual report, the Public Health organization has given a selection of its papers in the *Quarterly*, while the JOURNAL has published those which belonged to the American Nurses' Association in its narrower sense. This year, as it is impossible to rightly separate the papers and to decide which one belongs to which organization, this magazine as the official organ of the American Nurses' Association will publish the entire programme of the joint sessions as well as the proceedings of the American Nurses' Association. It will not publish the business reports of the League or of the Public Health organization nor the round tables. The other two affiliated associations will likewise have the entire programme at their disposal to publish as they see fit, as all the material of the convention belongs to each in equal measure, with the exceptions above noted.

Our method will be to publish the official proceedings in the July JOURNAL with the presidents' addresses and as many of the papers as the magazine can hold. The other papers will follow in August and September, as nearly as possible in their proper order. In this way our readers will have a complete record of the joint meetings of the convention in all of their aspects.

Although we have on hand a great quantity of accepted material of interest and value, we shall hold it all back until the convention papers have been presented. Secretaries of associations are asked to notice that no reports or news items will be published in the July JOURNAL and only those of vital importance in the magazines for August and September. The departments also will be omitted from the July number.

WAR PROHIBITION

The American Nurses' Association has gone on record as endorsing War Prohibition. Why should nurses be interested in this subject? Partly because they know the need of alcohol in their work in the composition of tinctures, in the manufacture of ether, as a local anaesthetic as fuel. Also, as citizens, they know that it is needed in the manufacture of explosives. The Committee on Wartime Prohibition tells us that when it is combined with kerosene, alcohol may be used instead of gasoline for motors. It is also used and needed in many industries, in the preparation of dye stuffs, in the manufacture of shellacs and varnishes. This committee goes on to make the plea that instead of closing the breweries and distilleries, we should transform them, that they should make alcohol still, not for the purpose of drink, but for filling these other needs. As we go to press it seems doubtful whether Congress is going to endorse prohibition; whether it does now or not, the question is bound to be brought up again and again until all the resources of the nation are used for human need and not for human indulgence, especially during the period of war.